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TAGS: [PREL](#) [HR](#) [BK](#)

SUBJECT: CROATIAN PM SANADER'S CALL FOR A CONFERENCE ON
BOSNIA AND HERZEGOVNIA

Classified By: CDA Greg Delawie for reasons 1.4(b) and (d).

¶1. (C) Croatian PM Sanader's call for a conference on Bosnia and Herzegovina is primarily an effort to keep the attention of the international community on the needs of BiH in light of other high-profile concerns such as Kosovo and Lebanon, MFA State Secretary Hidajet Biscevic told Charge August 10. The PM is not looking to spur a conference immediately, Biscevic said, but in the medium term. The MFA is preparing a nonpaper on the subject which Post should receive shortly, he added.

¶2. (C) Sanader decided to raise the issue publicly at this point due to the failure of the constitutional reform effort and the announcement of the Peace Implementation Council that the Office of the High Representative would close next summer. He is particularly concerned that BiH will be "unattended" following the closure of the OHR. Croatia is interested in the situation in BiH, Biscevic noted, for two reasons: the GOC wants to see stability in a neighboring state with which it shares a lengthy border, and is concerned about the welfare of the BiH Croats who reside there as well. Sanader hopes to encourage BiH politicians to restart their efforts to promote constitutional reform.

¶3. (C) Drawing on Washington guidance, Charge noted that the USG appreciated Croatia's interest in and support for constitutional reform in BiH. That said, he explained that the international community in BiH has tried to avoid further discussion of constitutional reform issues in the run-up to the October 1 elections, given the risk of nationalists from all three ethnic groups taking advantage of the topic in an effort to make electoral gains. Charge asked that the GOC hold off on further discussions of this proposal until after the elections, and that it work closely with the USG, EU, and the rest of the international community to promote stability in BiH.

¶4. (C) Biscevic agreed with Charge's proposal. He emphasized that Sanader's effort was not intended to influence internal arrangements within BiH (e.g., in favor of the BiH Croats); it was a "strategic" effort to keep attention focused on and within BiH in order to promote positive change. He said that the GOC indeed wanted to cooperate closely with its international community partners on BiH stability; Biscevic said that the PM had discussed his ideas with Adnan Terzic, Olli Rehn, and Jose Manuel Barosso before making them public.
DELAWIE